



# FLASHPOINT

## The Official Newsletter of Lynchburg Fire & EMS

### Chief's Corner

#### "The Circle of Problem-Solving Responsibility"

There is a responsibility on the part of every employee in the Lynchburg Fire & EMS Department to continuously work to solve tough, long-standing organizational problems, as well as routine problems and issues that present themselves as proverbial "brush fires."

The key to handling any issue successfully is most often rooted in the manner in which employees and the organization interact to problem solve, implement a solution, and communicate the results. This process is a continuous circle of problem-solving responsibility that involves all members of the organization. Within the circle, each of us has an area of responsibility.

First, employers have a responsibility to search out for potential problems and not just react to problems when they occur. Sure, problems are going to blindsides all organizations. We call those "brush fires." Decisions about these "brush fire" issues sometimes must be made in a matter of minutes; however, this type of problem solving will ultimately overwhelm the organization's ability to be proactive. Remember, proactive leadership seeks out weak spots and handles them prior to them becoming "out-of-control" emergencies.

Employers also have an initial responsibility to determine the facts in a situation and filter out any emotional aspects that tend to cloud the true facts and circumstances. Most of the time, this initial process is related to "root cause analysis," or a part of what many of you now know as "completed staff work." Our organization is committed to the process of "completed staff work" because it involves all of our stakeholders, relies on problem solving through research of facts and data, and then provides multiple options as possible solutions for implementation.

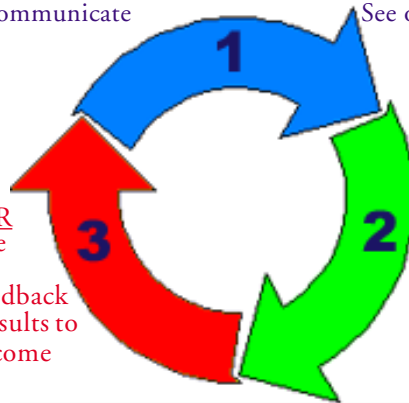
#### EMPLOYERS

Handle daily issues  
Determine facts  
Find root cause  
Communicate

Be proactive  
Filter out emotion  
Completed Staff Work  
See out problems

#### EMPLOYER

Hold people accountable  
Evaluate feedback  
Compare results to desired outcome



#### EMPLOYEES

Participate  
Stay abreast of change  
Implement solution  
Provide feedback

Lastly, in this first phase, the employer has a responsibility to communicate the implementation of the solution. Since open communication is a basic value of our department, the solution in most cases is already widely known prior to its being implemented.

The second part of the circle of responsibility is employee driven. Employees have the responsibility to participate as stakeholders in solving the problem. We all need to stay abreast of process changes and happenings in the department. It is all of our responsibilities to stay involved in what is occurring while it is happening and not after a solution has been implemented.

Employees also have to be responsible for implementing the solution to the best of their ability. After a full faith effort toward implementing the solution, employees need to provide the organization with feedback on how the solution to the problem is working.

The circle comes back to management when it holds people accountable for working to implement the solution.

Finally, employers need to evaluate solution results to see how they compare

with the desired outcome that indicated what success would look like, thus taking us back to the beginning of the problem-solving process.

As you can see, we all have a responsibility for problem solving regardless of where we are in the organization. The key is to figure out where we fit in the circle of responsibility and engage ourselves to be a part of the solution. Our department will ultimately be successful when everyone engages and accepts responsibility for problem solving.

Until next time, stay safe.

*Buchley*

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You've finished your shift, you're on your way home when you drive by the local convenience store and notice a sign in the window stating, "Buy your lottery ticket here... every ticket sold is guaranteed to be a winner!" Would you stop and buy a ticket? The answer is probably "yes" because you would assured to be a winner. Well, now you do have a chance to be a sure winner.

The Lynchburg Fire & EMS Department has partnered with the Lynchburg Police Department and Victory Christian Fellowship Church to build, furnish, and operate "Victory House." Victory House is a project designed to house victims of a burn-out accident or any other misfortune. While the Salvation Army and Red Cross do an admirable job, they offer short-term solutions. Victory House will be available for a family to walk into a completely furnished, 28 x 40 single family dwelling with food already in the cabinets, linens on the bed, and all the comforts of home. Victory House will be owned and operated by Victory Christian Fellowship Church, 615 Leesville Road, under the leadership of Reverend Ken Parrish. Here's a real opportunity to participate in a "no strings attached" project to help people in need.

A press conference was held on December 18, 2002, announcing the project. Groundbreaking and actual grading is scheduled to begin on April 9, 2003, with a building blitz and challenge taking place on April 26, 2003. Under the direction of Tom Gerdy, the construction will begin and the completed project will be dedicated in May 2003.

You might ask, "So, how do I help?" To complete this project, volunteer carpenters, plumbers, electricians, roofers, laborers, cooks, cleaners, and gophers will be needed. At the end of the project, Victory House will be dedicated to the memory of a firefighter and police officer who perished in the September 11, 2001 tragedy. This is the first project of its kind in the entire United States and we hope to challenge other communities and departments to help those victims that we come in contact with almost every day.

Watch "Flashpoint" for various ways that you can help with this "sure winner" project.

## Strategic Plan Update

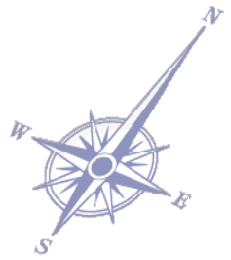
It has now been almost one year since the department's Strategic Plan was implemented. As a result, many changes have since occurred and everyone has been very busy making the plan a success.

In order to determine how successful we have been over the past year, and to plan accordingly for the upcoming year, it is necessary to review and update the Strategic Plan.

On September 5, 2002, Senior Staff and the Battalion Chiefs met to begin the annual review of the Strategic Plan. During this meeting, the Battalion Chiefs, who have been managing various focus areas and business groups, reported on the progress being made in each of their respective areas. This information provided the groundwork for reprioritizing of goals, strategies, and tasks contained within the Strategic Plan.

In October, Deborah Dunford (Strategic Plan facilitator) led the Senior Staff in a work session which focused on analyzing the progress that has been made over this past year. The Strategic Plan was modified in accord with newly defined expectations. This updated version of the plan is currently being distributed to the Battalion Chiefs, who will join Senior Staff on January 15, 2003 to review the update, provide feedback, and discuss and plan for development of performance measures.

Designed as a dynamic working document, the Strategic Plan will effectively ensure that it will serve the organization for years to come!



## Captain's Process Complete



The department recently completed its first Captain Promotional Process using the new format. This process was both challenging and rewarding for all of the employees who participated.

The new process allows the candidates to highlight what they have done to prepare for the position and to stress what they feel is important. This is done during phase one with the completion of a Personal Assessment Report (PAR), which is a new exercise to the Captain's process. The PAR is a great learning tool and helps give candidates a guide for necessary areas for future training and development.

In phase two the candidates were involved in an assessment center where they had the chance to display their skills. This involved a presentation, a tabletop exercise, and an in-basket exercise.

Upon completion of the process, the scores were tabulated and the final ranking was released. Chief Martinette reviewed the list and was pleased with the process. He stated, "all of the employees on the final list will make good officers."

I would like to thank everyone who participated in the process for their patience and understanding as we underwent a new process. I hope it was a positive experience and educational as well.

Brad Ferguson  
Deputy Chief of Administration

## Officer In-Service Training

It is incumbent upon the Training Division to schedule and develop training for all levels of the department. As Interim Training Officer I feel that the department needs to develop and deliver an officer development curriculum. In January, a class will be held to help line officers standardize the Incident Command System across the organization. The first class will be an overview of the department's Incident Command policy.

It is the Training Division expectation that the outcome of these training classes will enhance overall fire ground communication between division and group leaders and the incident commander. Subsequent classes will be held twice a year in an effort to give each line supervisor the tools they need to make our organization successful. Some of the topics will include Time Management, Delegation and Disaster Planning, and other topics that will help supervisors in the daily operations of the department.

Captain Darrell Evans  
Interim Training Officer

## Training Division News

### Upcoming Events!

January \* CPR recertification will begin

February\* EMT recertification classes will begin

(\*Schedules were distributed to all stations during the last week of December)

Please note that all current training opportunities are posted on the bulletin board outside the Training Division.

### Training Division Relocates

Don't be alarmed if you visit Fire Administration to see a member of the Training Division staff and you can't find them! The Training Division recently relocated to the space previously occupied by the Citizens First Center.

Additionally, the Chief's Office will soon be relocating to the Training Division's former space. The next time you pass by Fire Administration, stop in and see all of the changes taking place!

### 2003 FLASHPOINT

In the upcoming year, it is certain that many great things will be happening in the department that are "newsworthy," as well as general information that needs to be shared throughout the department.

If you are aware of information that should be published in the Flashpoint newsletter, please contact either Public Information Officer Robert Lipscomb or Tammy Sage.



## Life Saving Crew Integration



On August 12, 2002, the Lynchburg Fire & EMS Department and the Lynchburg Life Saving Crew formed a committee at the request of City Manager Kim Payne to develop a plan for integration of resources from the Lynchburg Life Saving Crew into the operations of the Lynchburg Fire & EMS Department.

The committee's research included, but was not limited to, information from Pre-hospital Patient Care Report (PPCR) (time of day for most calls, day of week with most calls, area with greatest number of calls, etc.), current response zone maps, and Life Saving Crew records and statistics.

Utilizing the Completed Staff Work model, the committee developed an initial draft of the plan for integration. A final draft is being drawn up and will be presented to the stakeholders on January 13, 2003, at the Lynchburg Life Saving Crew building. The meeting will begin at 5:00 p.m. and will include a Powerpoint presentation.

If the final draft is accepted by all of the stakeholders, including the Fire Chief, the first stage of implementation will take place on March 1, 2003. At this time, the Crew members who have completed the required precept hours and/or patient contacts will begin responding to calls in a predetermined response area.

The Crew's primary focus will then shift to EMS service delivery, instead of "rescue." Once this shift is made, future plans could include the Crew outfitting their heavy rescue unit 904 to better serve the citizens and to assist the Fire Department on the fireground with equipment such as lights and air.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact any of the committee members listed below:

#### Committee Members:

Battalion Chief Walter Bailey

Captain Ronnie Coleman

Firefighter/Paramedic Jimmy Mitchell

Bill Aldrich, Lyn-Comm

Grant Azdell, Chief of the Lynchburg Life Saving Crew

Rick Ruggieri, Assistant Chief of the Lynchburg Life Saving Crew





## Certifications & Development

### Grant Writing

Darrell Evans

Rick Guedj

Jonathan Wright

### Retention Training

John Spinner

### Truck Company Operations

Lee Day

Ben Barber

### Managing Company Tactical Operations

Jack Williams

### HTR Rope Rescue I

Darryl DuBose

Van Johnson

Carey Orange

Jim Wilson

## Class Act Awards

Following are December's Class Act Awards.



- **Barney Roakes**

For assistance with the department's annual pump testing.

## January Anniversaries

Charles Carwile	33 years
Russell Krantz	28 years
Darrell Evans	28 years
Bud Martin	27 years
Rick Guedj	27 years
Hank Feyerherd	23 years
Will McChesney	22 years
Walt Bailey	22 years

## Retirements

Congratulations to the following Fire Department members who retired in January. The department would like to thank them for their dedicated service to the department and the citizens of Lynchburg.

	<u>Years of Service</u>
E. B. Daniel	32 years
Dennis Duff	27 years, 1 month
Gary Regan	34 years, 2 months



## Safety Corner

### Driving In Adverse Weather



As winter arrives, so does adverse weather, causing dangerous road conditions and additional hazards for drivers. As drivers, you must recognize these dangers and adjust vehicle speed according to the condition of road surfaces. The driver should decrease speed gradually, slow down when approaching curves, keep off low or soft shoulders, and avoid sudden turns. With freezing weather you need to be cautious of the areas that freeze first, such as bridges, northern slopes on hills, shaded spots, and areas where snow blows across the roadway.

Since stopping distance is greatly increased on slippery road surfaces, you must adjust your speed to the road conditions so the apparatus can be stopped or maneuvered safely. Windshield wipers and defrosters should be in good condition in order to keep the windshield clean and clear.

Snow chains will reduce the stopping distance and considerably increase starting and hill-climbing traction on snow or ice. Regardless of this added security, it is still necessary to maintain lower speeds on slippery roads.



Brakes should be pumped, not jammed, for a gradual slowdown or stop. Sudden application of the brakes can lock the wheels and throw the apparatus into a dangerous skid. When you find yourself on ice, you need to use a series of rapid, but brief brake applications, making sure that the brake is completely released on each application. Remember it takes 3 to 15 times more distance to come to a complete stop on snow and ice as it does to come to a complete stop on dry pavement.

Some of the apparatus are equipped with a "dry road/slippy road" brake limiting valve. When the brakes are applied with the limiting valve in the dry road position, equal pressure is exerted on all brakes. When the brakes are applied with the limiting valve in the slippy road position, the pressure applied to the front brakes is less than the pressure applied to the rear brakes.

You, the driver, are responsible for getting your crew and yourself to the emergency scene and back to the station safely without incident.

Drive carefully and stay safe,  
Rick

